

on behalf of my wife Erma and me, our congratulations, our best wishes, and our thankfulness to the Almighty for giving us two such wonderful friends—Senator and Mrs. DANIEL INOUE.

I thank the people of Hawaii for repeatedly sending DANNY INOUE to the Senate.

I express this hope, and I am sure DANIEL INOUE would say the same if he were here:

May God, the Almighty Creator, always watch over and keep the Senate of the United States, and may God always bless the United States of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Kansas, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be dispensed with, and, without objection it is so ordered.

#### URGING COMPLIANCE WITH THE HAGUE CONVENTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Kansas, I request unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 293.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 293) urging compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Kansas, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to this resolution be printed in the RECORD, and, without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (H. Con. Res. 293) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 293

Whereas the Department of State reports that at any given time there are 1,000 open cases of American children either abducted from the United States or wrongfully retained in a foreign country;

Whereas many more cases of international child abductions are not reported to the Department of State;

Whereas the situation has worsened since 1993, when Congress estimated the number of American children abducted from the United States and wrongfully retained in foreign countries to be more than 10,000;

Whereas Congress has recognized the gravity of international child abduction in enact-

ing the International Parental Kidnapping Crime Act of 1993 (18 U.S.C. 1204), the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act (28 U.S.C. 1738a), and substantial reform and reporting requirements for the Department of State in the fiscal years 1998–1999 and 2000–2001 Foreign Relations Authorization Acts;

Whereas the United States became a contracting party in 1988 to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (in this concurrent resolution referred to as the “Hague Convention”) and adopted effective implementing legislation in the International Child Abduction Remedies Act (42 U.S.C. 11601 et seq.);

Whereas the Hague Convention establishes mutual rights and duties between and among its contracting states to expedite the return of children to the state of their habitual residence, as well as to ensure that rights of custody and of access under the laws of one contracting state are effectively respected in other contracting states, without consideration of the merits of any underlying child custody dispute;

Whereas article 13 of the Hague Convention provides a narrow exception to the requirement for prompt return of children, which exception releases the requested state from its obligation to return a child to the country of the child’s habitual residence if it is established that there is a “grave risk” that the return would expose the child to “physical or psychological harm or otherwise place the child in an intolerable situation” or “if the child objects to being returned and has attained an age and degree of maturity at which it is appropriate to take account of the child’s views”;

Whereas some contracting states, for example Germany, routinely invoke article 13 as a justification for nonreturn, rather than resorting to it in a small number of wholly exceptional cases;

Whereas the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), the only institution of its kind, was established in the United States for the purpose of assisting parents in recovering their missing children;

Whereas article 21 of the Hague Convention provides that the central authorities of all parties to the Convention are obligated to cooperate with each other in order to promote the peaceful enjoyment of parental access rights and the fulfillment of any conditions to which the exercise of such rights may be subject, and to remove, as far as possible, all obstacles to the exercise of such rights;

Whereas some contracting states fail to order or enforce normal visitation rights for parents of abducted or wrongfully retained children who have not been returned under the terms of the Hague Convention; and

Whereas the routine invocation of the article 13 exception, denial of parental visitation of children, and the failure by several contracting parties, most notably Austria, Germany, Honduras, Mexico, and Sweden, to fully implement the Convention deprives the Hague Convention of the spirit of mutual confidence upon which its success depends: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress urges—*

(1) all contracting parties to the Hague Convention, particularly European civil law countries that consistently violate the Hague Convention such as Austria, Germany and Sweden, to comply fully with both the letter and spirit of their international legal obligations under the Convention;

(2) all contracting parties to the Hague Convention to ensure their compliance with

the Hague Convention by enacting effective implementing legislation and educating their judicial and law enforcement authorities;

(3) all contracting parties to the Hague Convention to honor their commitments and return abducted or wrongfully retained children to their place of habitual residence without reaching the merits of any underlying custody dispute and ensure parental access rights by removing obstacles to the exercise of such rights;

(4) the Secretary of State to disseminate to all Federal and State courts the Department of State’s annual report to Congress on Hague Convention compliance and related matters; and

(5) each contracting party to the Hague Convention to further educate its central authority and local law enforcement authorities regarding the Hague Convention, the severity of the problem of international child abduction, and the need for immediate action when a parent of an abducted child seeks their assistance.

#### RUSSIAN FEDERATION’S TREATMENT OF ANDREI BABITSKY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Kansas, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 598, S. Res. 303.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 303) expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the treatment by the Russian Federation of Andrei Babitsky, a Russian journalist working for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment, as follows:

[The parts of the resolution intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets and the parts of the resolution intended to be inserted are shown in *italic*.]

#### S. RES. 303

Whereas Andrei Babitsky, an accomplished Russian journalist working for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, a United States Government-funded broadcasting service, faces serious charges in Russia after being held captive and beaten by Russian authorities;

Whereas the mission of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s bureaus in Russia is to provide Russian listeners objective and uncensored reporting on developments in Russia and around the world;

Whereas Russian authorities repeatedly denounced Mr. Babitsky for his reporting on the war in Chechnya, including his documentation of Russian troop casualties and the Russian Federation’s brutal treatment of Chechen civilians;

Whereas Senate Resolutions 223 and 262 of the One Hundred Sixth Congress condemning the violence in Chechnya and urging a peaceful resolution to the conflict were adopted by the Senate by unanimous consent on November 19, 1999, and February 24, 2000, respectively;

Whereas on January 16, Mr. Babitsky was arrested by Russian police in the Chechen battle zone, was accused of assisting the Chechen forces, and was told he was to stand trial in Moscow;

Whereas Russian authorities took Mr. Babitsky to a “filtration camp” for suspected Chechen collaborators where he was